



# *Enhancing Educational Outcomes for Alaska Native Students through Networked Inquiry*

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*Presentation prepared for the NZCARN Symposium 2012*

**College of Education**

***School of Māori, Social and Cultural Studies***





# Alaska Native Languages





# Urban Alaska





# Anchorage



# Shopping



# Large Urban Schools





# Middle School Classroom



# Inconveniences....





# Rural Alaska—The Bush





# Chevak



# Subsistence



# Rural School





# Whole School Meeting





# Inconveniences

- Connected



- Disconnected





# Linguistic Diversity

- Yupik First
- ELL Classroom

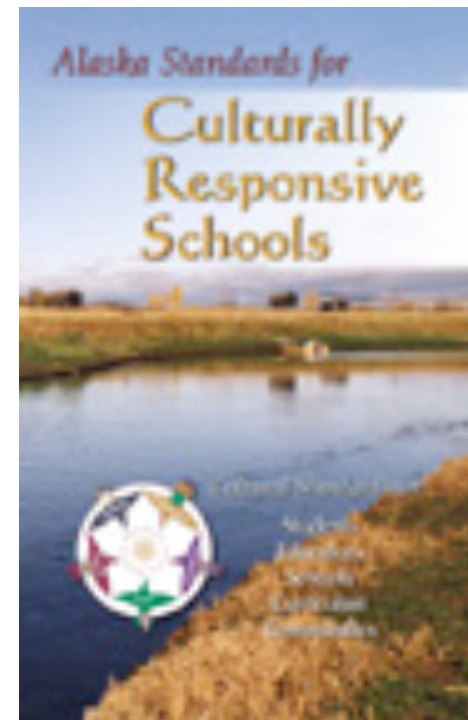






# Alaska Education Context

- Low level of student achievement/educational success, especially among Alaska Native youth
- High drop-out rate, nearly 60% in some communities
- Low % of college attendance per capita
- Highest rate of teen suicide per capita
- High teacher/principal turnover rate
- Increasing int'l immigrant population
- State Standards and Assessments/NCLB
- 70% Teachers from “Outside”





# Alaska Partnership

## FOR TEACHER ENHANCEMENT



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## Welcome to the APTE Website

***The Alaska Partnership for Teacher Enhancement grant will close on December 31st, 2005 after a very successful six years. We have enjoyed working with our many partners and colleagues throughout Alaska and wish you continued success in your endeavors.***

The Alaska Partnership for Teacher Enhancement grant is a five-year US Department of Education grant that will amount to approximately \$6.5 million at the end of the life of the grant. (Approximately \$3 million is comprised of matching funds primarily from the University of Alaska.) The partnership recently received a one year, no-cost extension so the grant is now entering its 6th year. This multi-faceted grant serves numerous partners and their interests, and affords the University of Alaska Anchorage and the State of Alaska the opportunity to prepare quality teachers who can help ensure all students leave their public education experience with the requisite skills and knowledge to be successful.



### The four major project initiatives are:

-  Collaborative design and delivery of a post-baccalaureate teacher preparation program.
-  Development of Professional Development opportunities in partner school districts through study groups, Summer Institutes and Leadership, Mentoring and Peer Coaching training.
-  Creation of six urban and three rural Professional Development Schools.
-  Development of a career ladder for teacher aides from an AA degree to teacher certification.



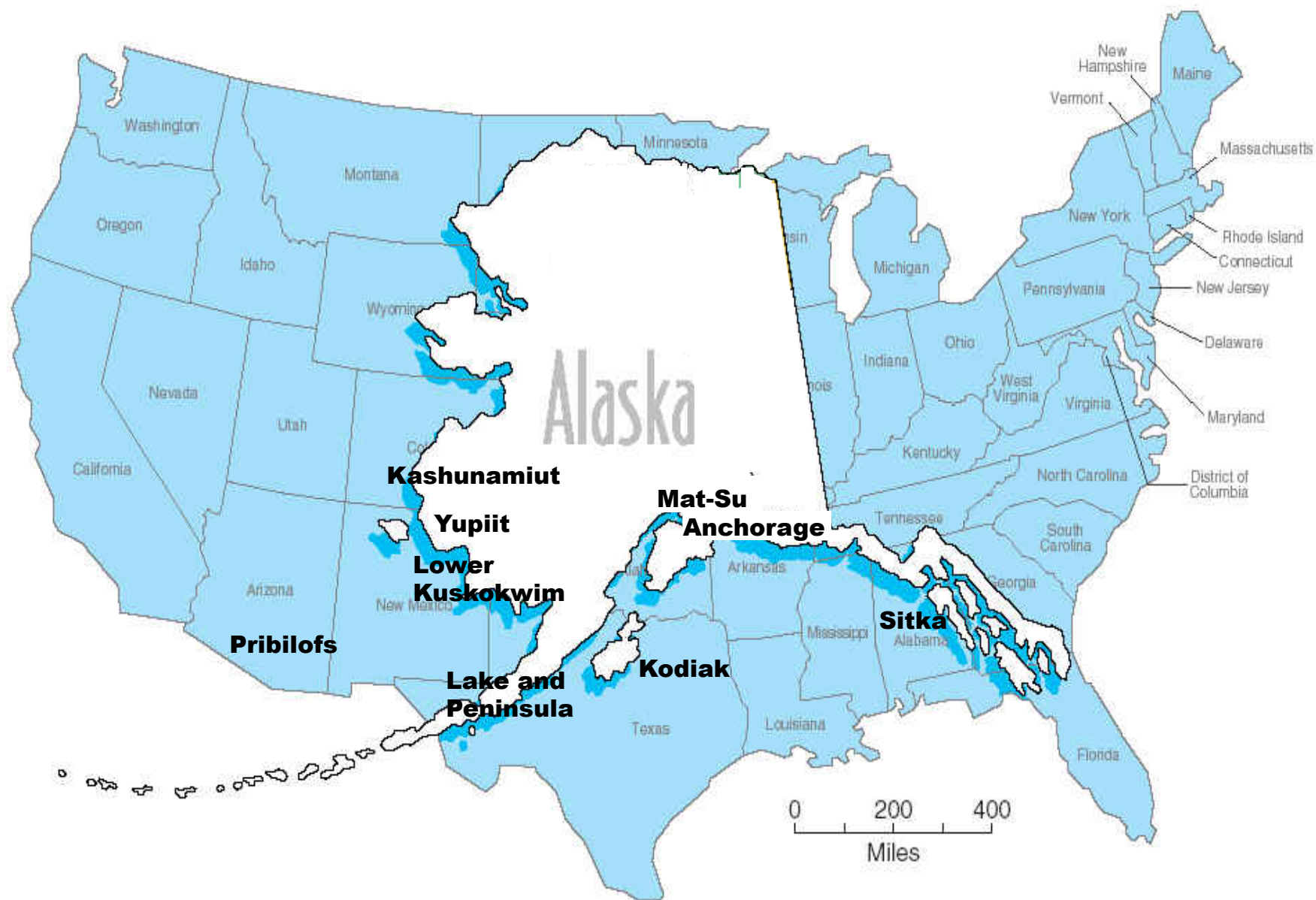
## **BUILDING COMMUNITY SHARING WISDOM NOURISHING LEARNING**

*A school-university partnership  
working together*

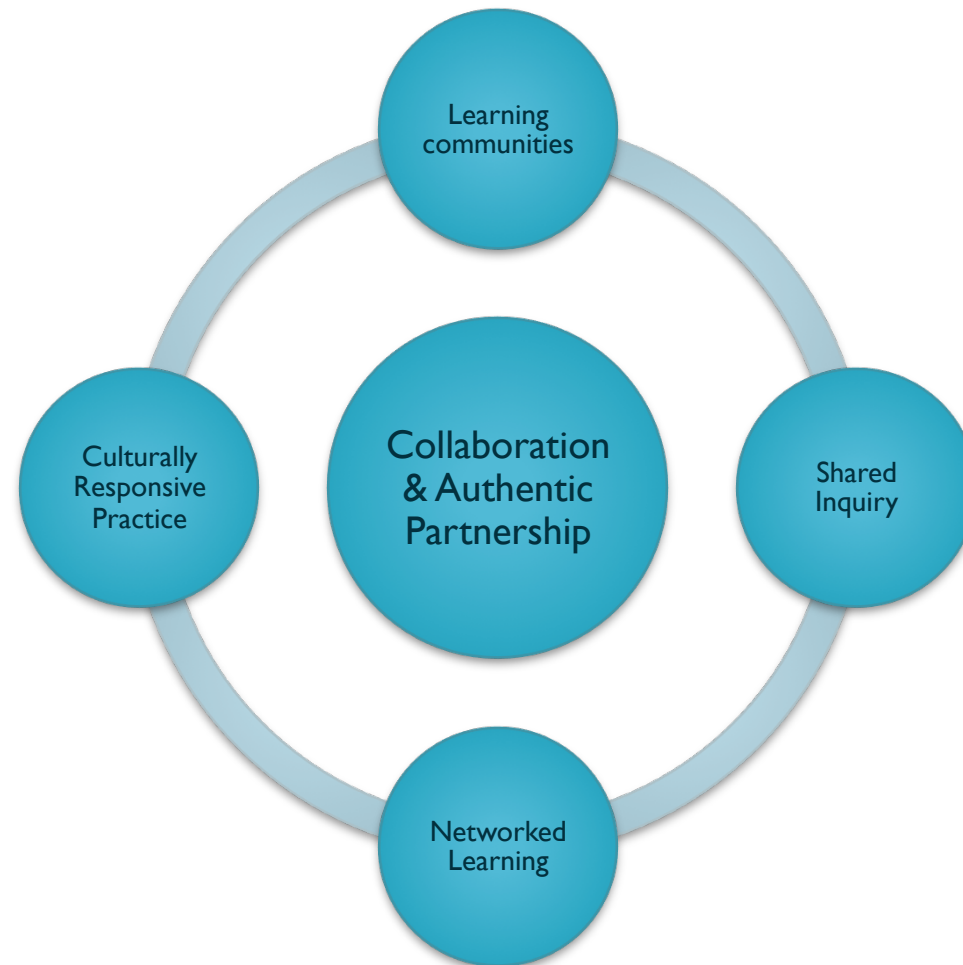
- *through reflective professional learning*
- *to create an interdependent network*
- *focused on student learning*
- *using culturally responsive teaching & data-informed decision-making*

*\$9.3 million Teacher Quality  
Enhancement grant from US DOE*





# AEIN Conceptual Framework: Creating the Conditions for Learning and Innovation





# Networked Learning (Katz,, Earl & Jaafar, 2009; Anklam, 2007)

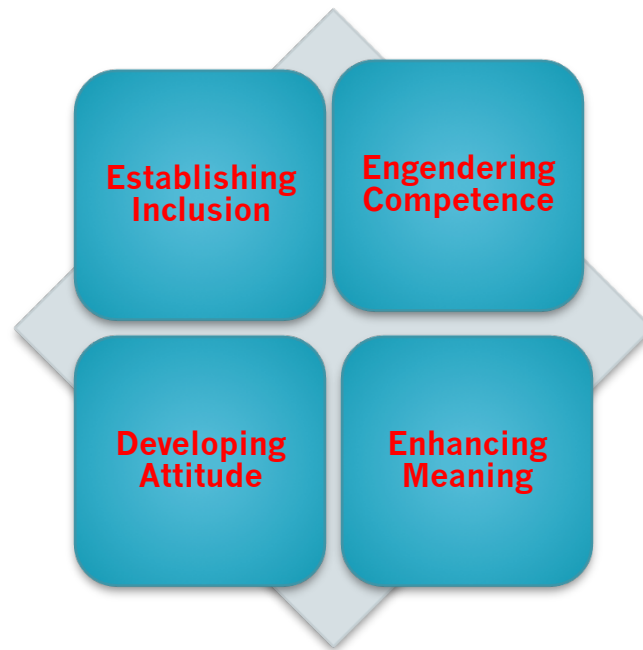
People from different organizations engage with one another to learn together, to innovate and to enquire into practice.

- Four distinct learning processes:
  - Learning from one another
  - Learning with one another
  - Learning of behalf of one another
  - Meta learning
- Characterized by:
  - Focus on expertise as locus of professional authority
  - Fluid roles and responsibilities
  - Non-hierarchical

# Professional Learning Communities

- “Deprivatize” practice
- Commitment to learning for all members
- Shared values, vision, commitments
- Reflective, on-going inquiry
- Sense of collective responsibility





**Culturally Responsive Motivational Framework**  
(Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995)

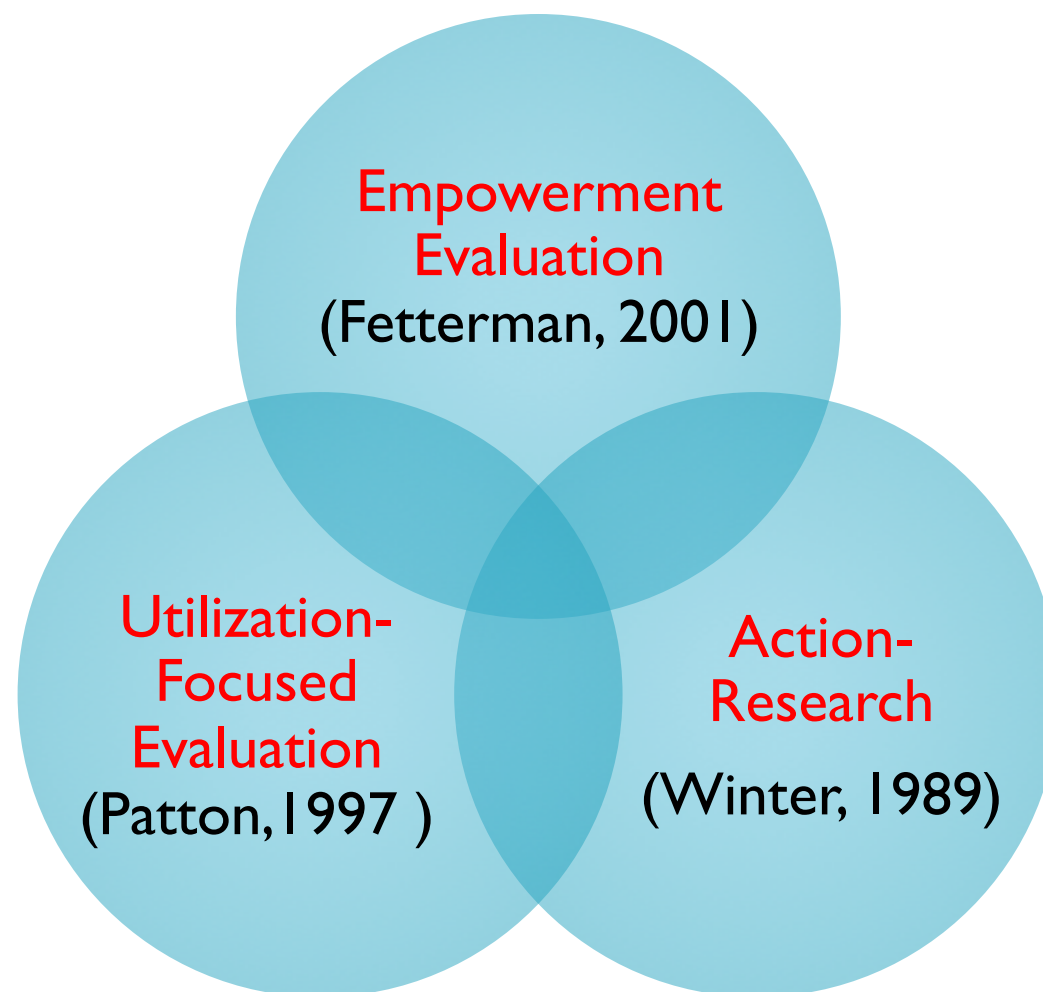
## Three Learning/ Inquiry Models Framed our Work

*Three Fields of Knowledge*  
(Jackson & Temperley, 2007)





## Capacity-Building & Values-Oriented Evaluation/ Research Models



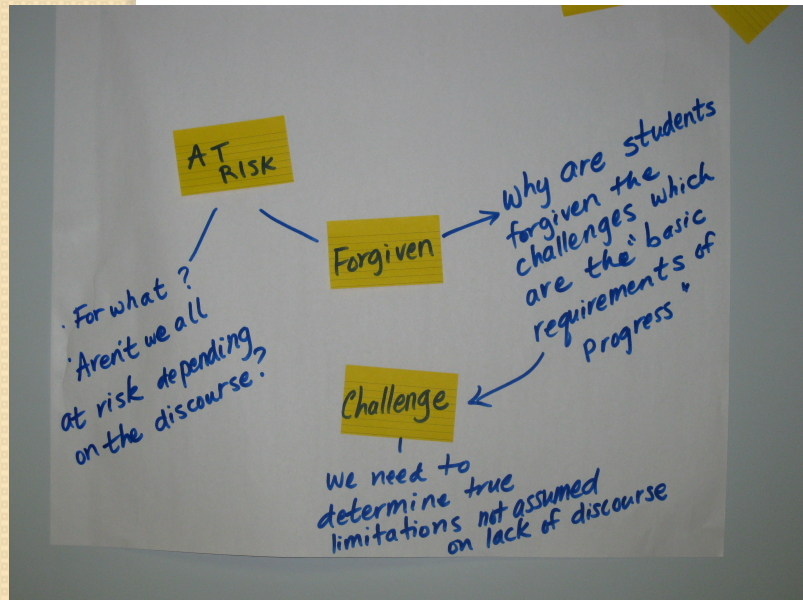


# ***AEIN Network School Commitments***

- Develop and implement a school renewal plan.
- Form a Data Team to assist in the collection and analysis of student learning and achievement data.
- Prepare school Annual Report as an end-of-year self-evaluation.
- Share Annual Reports within the Network Schools.
- Administer the NSDC survey on a yearly basis and use it as one measure to assess school culture
- Serve as internship sites for ITE programmes

Data Team Membership: Principal, Teacher Leader, Culture Bearer, additional members

# Network Development



## Learning Structures:

- In-person academies and work sessions
- On-line coursework/ PLD
- On-line Mini-Networks
- Site visits: IHE faculty to schools; school-to-school
- ITE interns in schools/rural experience

## Focused inquiry processes:

- DataWise
- Logic Model
- Reflective, explicit modeling

## Public Practice:

- Celebrations/Posters
- Google Docs/Ning
- Tuning & Discernment protocols
- Probing Questions
- Co-constructed Agendas



# A supporting framework for network and site data teaming: Data-Wise Process



- Structured data teams' work
- Reinforced developmental sequence for individuals
- Provided a rubric for evaluation use and school inquiry
- Focused us on “**What can we do?**”

# Sequence of team building & inquiry focused development...

- **Year 1: Began with network academies to explore...**
  - What/who constitutes core “data team”
  - Introduction of Data-wise process
  - First year data collection around pre-existing School Improvement Plan
  - Assessment literacy focus—state testing data
- **Year 2: Network academies NOT enough**
  - Refined more site-specific projects and increased site visits
  - Added online assessment course—PD option/PG option
  - Logic Model Introduced linked to Data-wise
  - Scaffolds/ Template for School Report
- **Year 3: Reinforcing inquiry & collaboration protocols**
  - Consciously developing trust-building strategies
  - Explicit reflection on Evaluation processes through collaborative data collection
  - CRT used as framework for PLD, no longer a “subject” to be taught
  - Established mini-networks to support PLD—web 2.0 tools
  - Poster as “school report” on Logic Model –Celebration
  - Shared data collection from Posters
- **Year 4: Started action research around data-teaming**
  - Logic Model developed around focusing inquiry
  - Leadership Mini-Network
  - Discernment, probing questions & Critical Friend protocols
  - Co-construction of Academy agendas
  - Brought our “problems of practice” to shared space for inquiry
- **Year 5 & 6: Refined inquiry processes & incorporated “control” schools into Network**

# AEIN Celebration 2010: AEIN Poster

## Emergence of Networked Learning

**Alaska Educational Innovations Network (AEIN)** believes that the expertise to improve schools and student learning exists within Alaska's schools and universities, and that through networked learning this expertise can be effectively applied to school improvement efforts.

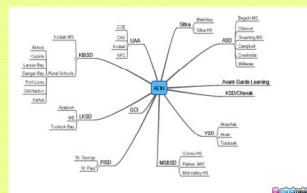
### Networked Learning:

- Uses research-recognized tools such as logic models to integrate, focus, and improve staff efforts around understanding and using data, assessing student growth and achievement, and improving instruction and learning.

- Builds capacity within schools and the state to design, implement and evaluate effective school improvement strategies.

### Outcomes:

By building on the wisdom and expertise from partners across the network, school improvement efforts become both cost-effective and context specific, both for local schools and Alaska.



The partners are all represented in a traditional model. Through our process, we evolved to the network on the right.



Threadless Poetic Synergy. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/teacup/2007755061/>

### Emergence:

"Change begins as local actions spring up simultaneously in many different areas. When they become connected, local actions can emerge as a powerful system with influence at a more comprehensive level." Wheatley and Frieze "Using Emergence to Take Social Innovation to Scale"

### Voices from Network Leaders:

"I've learned how to use data to create a logic model to improve performance, both my own and my students."

"I've learned that there is no one solution for everyone."

"That I have a voice and my experiences can add information to the teaching community."

"I have learned that developing a logic model can be painful but promotes a sense of shared purpose and goals."

### Research:

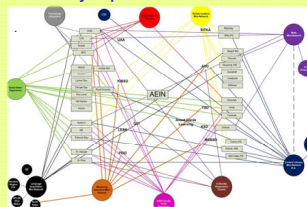
Recent results from a fifteen year study by the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, found that schools are ten times more likely to improve student achievement with support across leadership, professional development, environment, strong instructional guidance and materials, and a welcoming attitude towards parents and community.

### State-wide Initiatives

Alaska's Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) has recently produced a self-study guide for districts engaged in improvement efforts. The guide asks districts to assess their efforts across six domains including: leadership, professional development, environment, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

### Our Findings:

**AEIN's networked learning provides supports across DEED's six domains as well as parent community emphasis.**



**Student achievement results are promising.**





# AEIN Mini-Network Poster 2010

## Connecting Our Stories To Change Our Practice: A Journey Through *Networked Learning* With The Language Acquisition Network

**A key principle... Connecting the wisdom of practice with theory and research will result in new knowledge that can lead to change in practice.** Like a pebble dropped into a pond, the addition of new members and ideas creates interactions that are positive, ongoing, and interactive. Ongoing, culturally relevant, job embedded dialogue helps to support changes in thinking and practice.

### Diversity brings strength

Like an ever renewing tidal pool, the addition of linguists and teacher educators from around the country and even across the world helped revitalize the discussions of returning members. For example, a conversation with colleagues in New Zealand raised awareness of our understanding of literacy of the landscape which we later connected to the culturally responsive process CRIOP from Kentucky researchers. Our group continued to deepen our learning around the importance of context.

### Sustaining & Expanding

Alaskans for Language Acquisition has invited network members to keynote at their upcoming conference. In addition we will capture our networked learning journey on film case study.



### Making our practice transparent

Relational trust among network members has led to examination of practice. Observation helps us to learn on behalf of each other. Descriptive feedback provides critical feedback for the observers and the observed. Travel allows us understand the uniqueness and similarities of contexts.

### Inquiry focused dialogue: How is language connected to culture?

"...I learned that people acquire language from people that surround them, and the community they grow up in." Yupik Immersion Teacher

"... Dance is a specific form of communication.... And is used to reinforce one's identity...dance is a form of literacy." University Professor

### How is oral language connected to the written word?

"This is especially interesting, since many Native languages were primarily oral. One would not be truly fluent without knowing the oral... and certainly, now in our time, the written too." Fimmeraker

### How does participation in a network affect your educational practice?

"I did not expect by participating in this network that I would become a better teacher." University Professor



# AEIN Celebration 2010: Network Rural School Poster

## Mikelnguut Elitnaurviat and SIOP



### Who are we?

Mikelnguut Elitnaurviat is a English primary school servicing the grades of PreK-2. We have 275 students, and 52 staff members.

### Our inquiry question.

How do we successfully implement the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)?



**Why SIOP?** This year a District initiative was to intervene on our high population of Limited English Proficient students. SIOP was mandated by the District. We started the year trying to implement SIOP with very little knowledge. This was frustrating and not successful.

Using the logic model we created a path for a two year plan. We started with a SIOP book study in our grade level teams. We made a plan of implementation for the rest of this school year and next year.

A 2 credit class was also created continuing with a more in-depth look into the SIOP book. Professional Learning Communities were formed that fostered a peer observation. This was a major undertaking which have had it bumps as well as it success.

Several adults from with-in and out of the school have been major leaders in this process. We are a critical stage with many more steps to making this a success.



Being part of the team has given us time to focus on the changes we wish to make and tools and resources to make these changes happen. AEIN has provided support through external organizations such as CRIOP to help make a already positive program more culturally responsive. AEIN has not only helped ME look at our school and our programs more in-depth, but also to go beyond looking at the issues and start-making a constructive effort at changing them.

AEIN's Language resources have been a major factor in the changes here at Mikelnguut Elitnaurviat.





# AEIN Celebration 2010: Network Urban School Poster

## Nicholas Begich Middle School 2010



### AEIN Collaborative Outcomes

#### Staff

- AEIN Team Leaders (4)
- 3 Best Practices Study Groups (20)
- Teacher Observations (12) 14 in process
- National Board Certification (1) 9 interested
- Student Advanced Class Preparation (1)
- School Retreat 2010/2011 (32)
- Individual Learning Career Plan ILCP (2)

#### Student

- Over 50% of the students had a teacher involved in teacher observations or professional development.
- 359 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Completed ILCP
- Increase in positive behavior recognition and referrals

- 1000+ students grade 6-8
- 67% diverse
- 8% Children In Transition
- 11% ELL (English Language Learners)
- 76 % on free and reduced lunch
- 9% Gifted Education
- 23% Indian Education
- 18% Special Education

### Inquiry Question

How can teams improve academic achievement by strengthening connections with students?

### Development of Inquiry Question

Through a school survey, staff requested more time for teacher observations and professional development. To narrow the focus, we asked the staff to find strategies that would improve academic achievement through student connections.

### Impact on Student Learning

- 2% Increase in Terra Nova scores
- Increase in number of Honor Roll Students
- Climate survey, discipline referrals, attendance data pending



### AEIN Contributions/Benefits

- Working with other schools and AEIN staff provided focus, feedback, ideas and resources to assist in implementing our inquiry question.

- By changing the Inquiry Question, and due to improved outreach & a more flexible format there was dramatic change in staff involvement.

- Without this network, our school leaders would not have been able to collaborate on a specific issues to improve student learning.



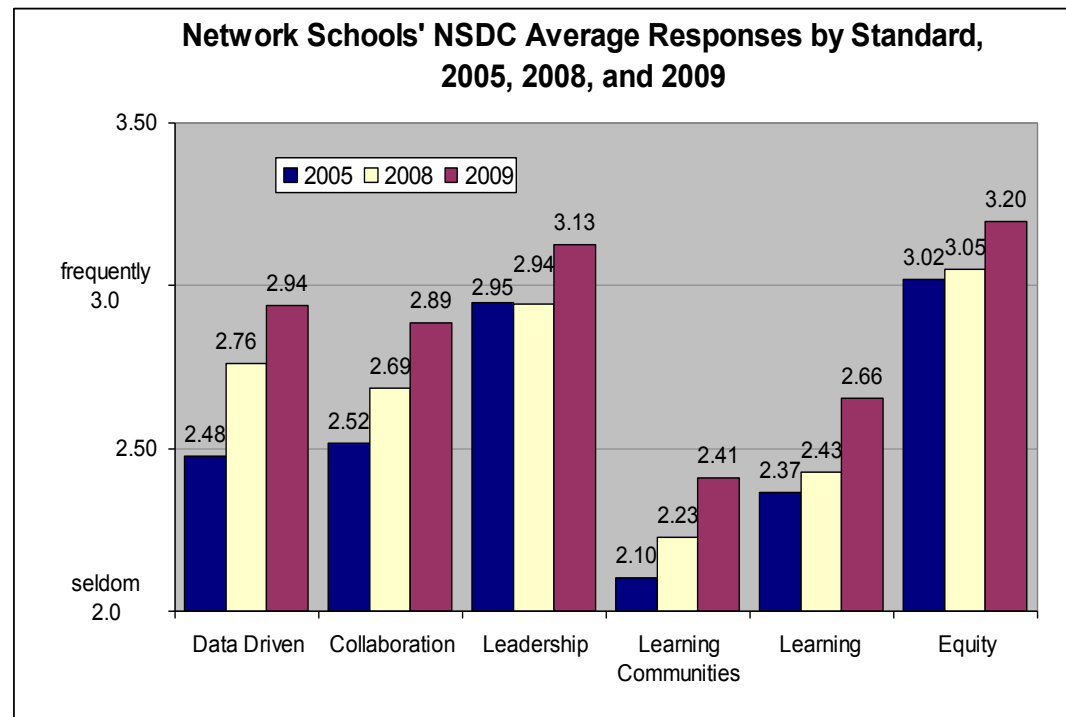




# Facilitating Networked Inquiry

- Tools/processes that supported facilitation & emergence of an action-oriented learning community:
  - Logic modeling
  - Data-wise cycle
  - Appreciative inquiry
  - Intentional protocols: probing questions, discernment
  - Organizational scaffolds: NING & E\*live
  - Framed evaluation around CRT  
Motivational Framework

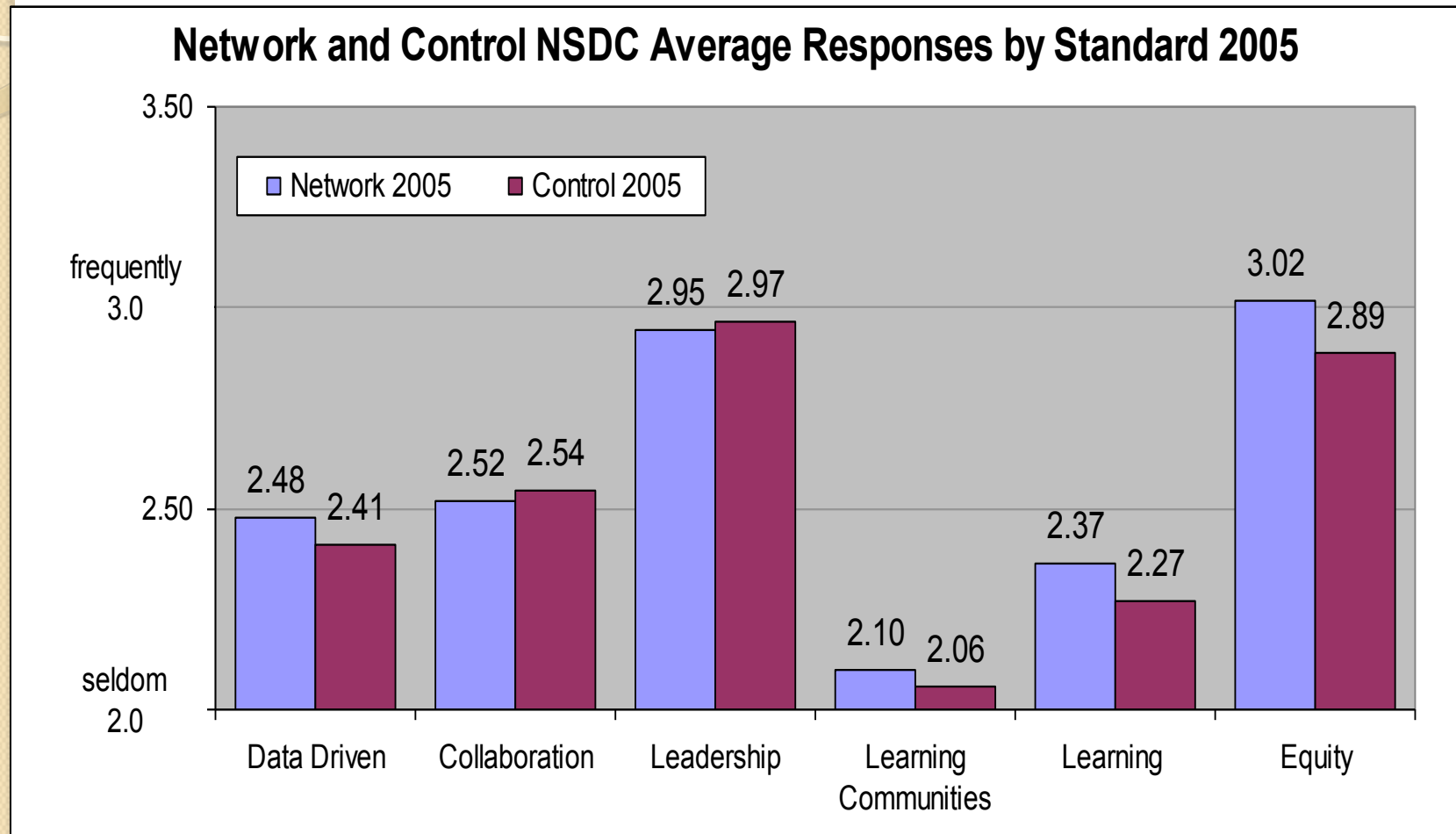
# Changes from 2005 to 2009



- Data Driven
- Collaboration
- Leadership
- Learning Communities
- Learning
- Equity

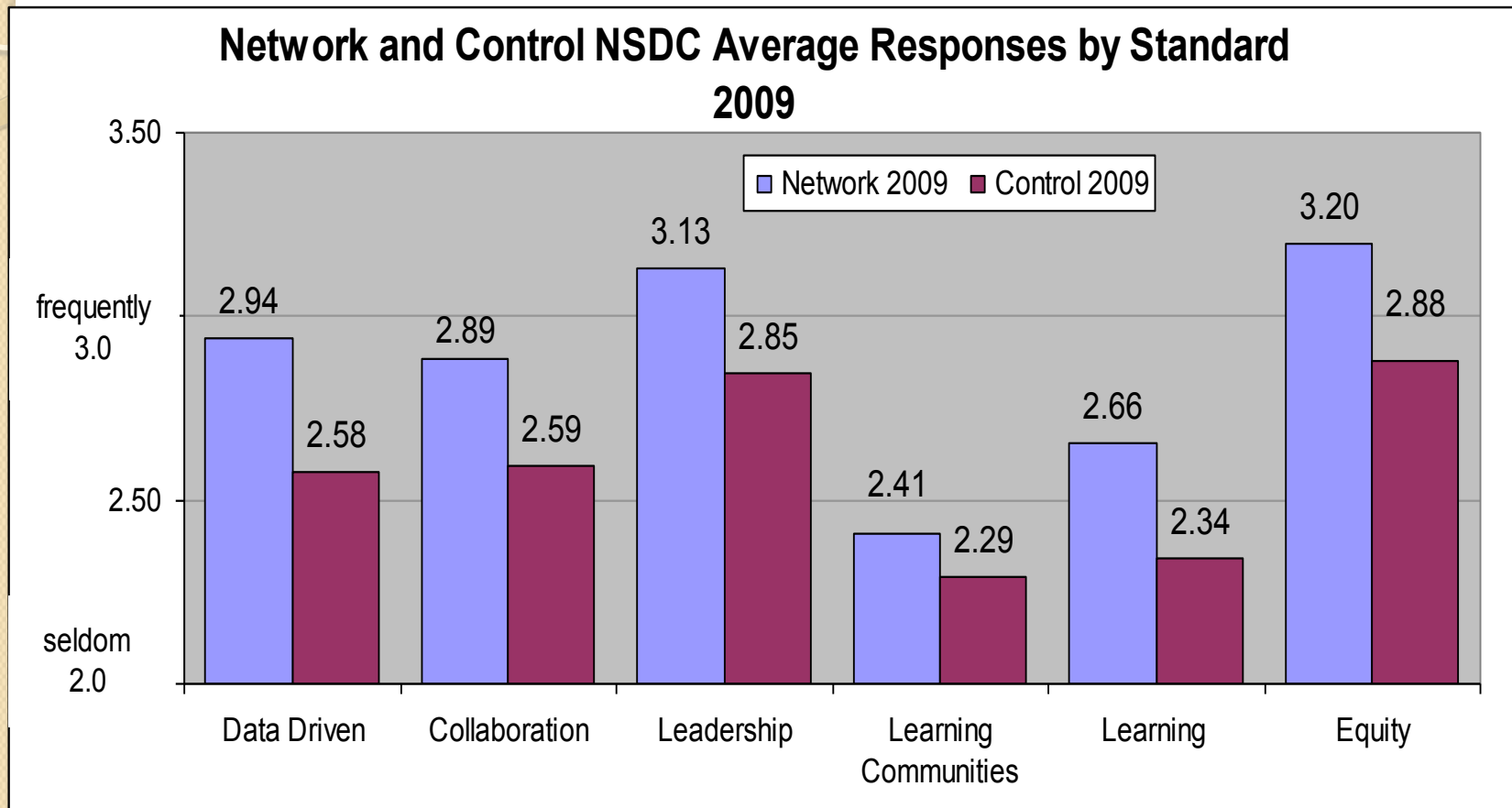
# Comparing Network and Control Schools

## 2005: little if any difference



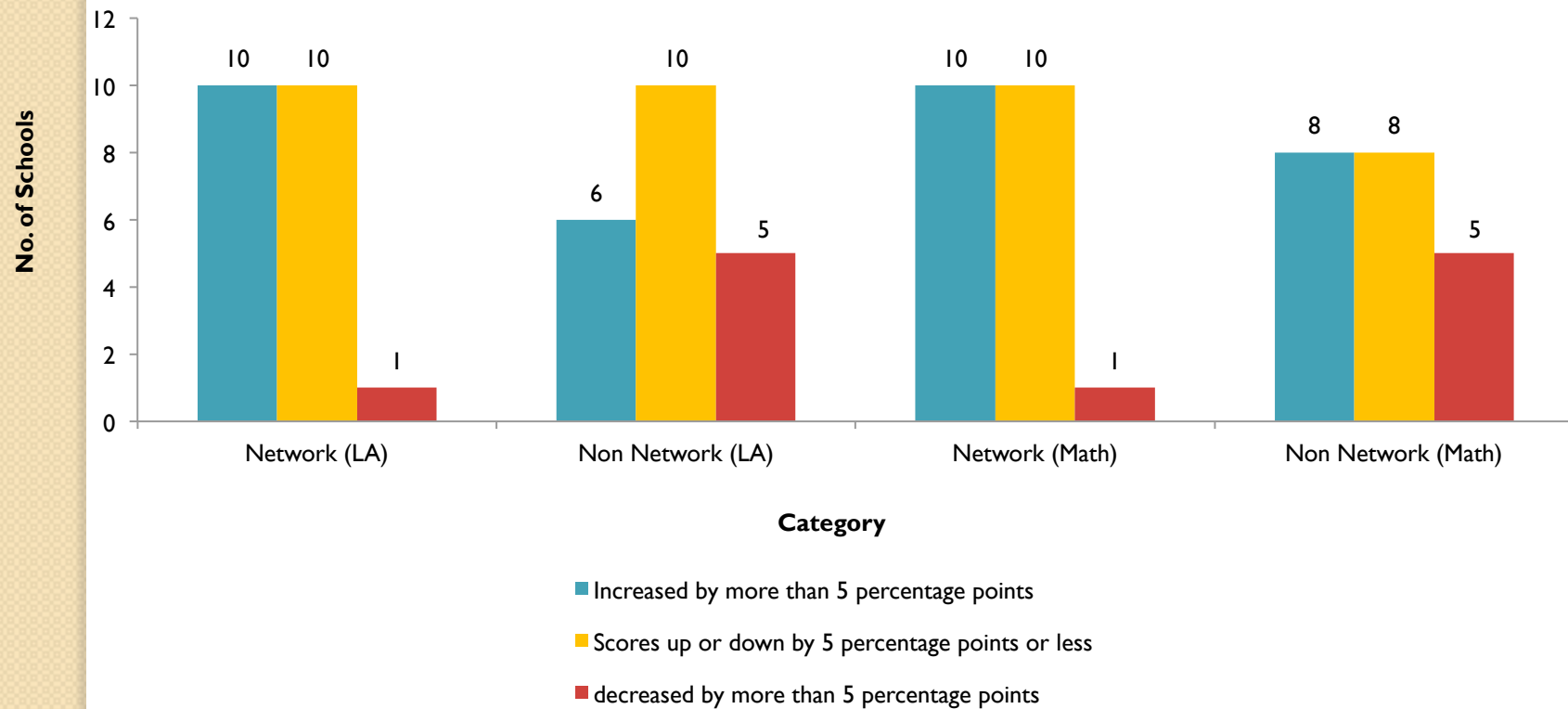


# Comparing Network and Control Schools 2009: Network schools higher in every standard



# Student Learning

## Comparison of Long-Term AEIN Network Schools with Similar Non-Network Schools





## Interweaving Empowerment Evaluation & Action-Research: Lessons Learned

- Empowerment evaluation supported macro focus on project as a whole
- Action research supported micro focus on the examination of practice in the teaching-learning space
- Neither alone was sufficient
- Together they allowed us to:
  - *Grapple with unexamined core concepts & assumptions*
  - *Adapt to the iterative and organic nature of networked learning to develop **Networked inquiry***
  - *Be responsive to contextual shifts*



# The journey continues....



Quyana



# Quyana...Thank you

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